

Affirmative Answers

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() Uniqueness overwhelms the link – both sides have no willingness to engage in productive negotiations. The status quo is already violent, and diplomacy won't change much.

Tharoor 14 – Ishaan Tharoor, writes about foreign affairs for The Washington Post, former Senior Editor at TIME magazine and Editor of TIME World, based in New York City, 2014 ("Beneath the conflict in Gaza lies the death of the two-state solution," Washington Post, July 25th, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2014/07/25/beneath-the-conflict-in-gaza-lies-the-death-of-the-two-state-solution/> | ADM)

It is not that controversial to suggest that the two-state solution – the mantra intoned for decades now by U.S. politicians when speaking of peace between Israelis and Palestinians – is dead. Indeed, a flurry of recent articles and commentary have all said as much. But as we watch the conflict in Gaza, it's easy to forget the shadow cast by the lapsed peace process. For more than two weeks, the Israeli military has pummeled the Gaza Strip, home to the militant group Hamas, which has been firing rockets into Israel. Caught in the warzone are 1.8 million Palestinians living in the cramped, impoverished territory. The resulting carnage has inflamed tensions, led to protests in the West Bank and suggestions that we may see the start of a Third Intifada, or Palestinian uprising. A recent Pew poll shows there is deepening pessimism among Israelis and Arabs about whether they can co-exist peacefully side by side.

[image omitted]

According to initial reports on Friday, the Israeli cabinet, confident in its strength of arms, rejected a U.S.-proposed ceasefire. Even if a ceasefire comes into effect, the anguish and bitterness of the current moment would underscore how distant the prospect of a separate, viable Palestinian state is -- an illusory goal that has driven U.S.-led talks for years, despite the steady accumulation of facts on the ground that would militate against it. Here are some reasons the two-state solution as we know it is dead, all of which echo in the latest tragic round of fighting.

Hamas is dominating the conversation

The Islamist organization whose militant wing is now locked in combat with Israel, alongside some other jihadist outfits, has never had any real interest in the two-state solution. As Israelis often point out, its founding charter shows no acceptance of the right of Israel to exist. And Hamas's refusal to renounce violence -- something the PLO of the late Yasser Arafat and current Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas has done -- keeps it firmly in the crosshairs of Israel's vast security apparatus.

The threat posed by Hamas to Israeli civilians is, in the rhetoric of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and others in his government, the original sin justifying all offensive Israeli action, including missile strikes, shelling and ground incursions into the Gaza Strip that have resulted in the deaths of hundreds of Palestinian civilians.

Earlier this year, Hamas was on its knees: It had lost allies abroad, was desperately short of funds and faced mounting anger in Gaza, the territory it controls and rules. The group buried the hatchet with Abbas's Fatah party in the West Bank and joined a unity government -- but the Israelis, as Nathan Thrall of the International Crisis Group writes, were opposed to that pact and made it virtually impossible for Hamas to pay the salaries of more than 40,000 public employees working in Gaza, whose economy has been hollowed out by Israeli and Egyptian blockades. "Hamas is now seeking through violence what it couldn't obtain through a peaceful handover of responsibilities," writes Thrall, referring to the present fighting.

Hamas is an institution built to resist Israeli occupation and thrives in such adversarial circumstances. Previous Israeli campaigns have exacted a punishing toll, particularly on civilians, but Hamas has withstood the offensives, cynically gaining in propaganda as bodies pile up around it. All the while, as my colleagues wrote this month, Abbas and the Palestinian establishment -- those seeking an independent Palestinian state through dialogue -- appear more enfeebled and irrelevant.

Israel doesn't think it needs a separate Palestinian state to feel safe

Netanyahu himself signaled clearly this month that the two-state solution was off the table. In a speech discussing the current Operation Protective Edge, he made this stark pronouncement: "I think the Israeli people understand now what I always say: that there cannot be a situation, under any agreement, in which we relinquish security control of the territory west of the River Jordan."

This would mean that any Palestinian state in the West Bank would still functionally exist under occupation, a non-starter for the Palestinians as well as those in the international community pushing for a lasting peace.

But Israeli concerns revolve entirely around the question of security, and its hawkish government appears to think a satisfying resolution can be found militarily. They repeatedly raise the comparative argument: Would your government allow militants to lob lethal rockets onto its citizens? As Michael Oren, former Israeli ambassador to the U.S., wrote today in The Washington Post, "war must be given a chance" to root out Hamas. There is strong support for this point of view in Israeli society, which has moved markedly toward the right since the 1993 Oslo accords that were supposed to pave the way for a two-state solution.

() The impact is non-unique. Escalating conflict is inevitable, and absent serious diplomatic progress, tensions won't subside.

Cohen 14 – Michael Cohen, fellow at The Century Foundation, former senior fellow at the New America Foundation and the American Security Project, adjunct lecturer in the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University, master's degree from Columbia University, 2014 ("Is the Arab-Israeli conflict going to be the war that never ends?" *The Guardian*, August 2nd, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/aug/03/arab-israel-palestinians-gaza-conflict-may-never-end> | ADM)

How does this end? It's a question that's been asked about the Arab-Israeli conflict for longer than most of us have been alive. In light of the bloodshed taking place in Gaza right now it's a question that seems as unanswerable as ever.

As great as the tragic loss of life in Gaza and Israel is, what makes things even worse is that for all the efforts of US diplomats to stop the killing neither side seems terribly interested in ending the violence or finding a long-term solution to conflict. Stop me if you've heard this story before.

Hamas has committed itself to a policy of attacking Israel with low-grade rockets, most of which are either shot down or fall harmlessly to the ground, fully aware that doing so will exact a terrible price on the Palestinian people.

Israel is more than willing to do Hamas's bidding. Already they have killed more than 1,000 Palestinians in order to stop rockets that have harmed a handful of Israeli civilians.

For Hamas, the current spate of fighting serves two purposes. It puts pressure on Israel to lessen the effects of the economic embargo on Gaza and it also provides Hamas with a symbolic political victory: strengthening the organisation's bona fides as the vanguard of Palestinian resistance against Israel. All of this bolsters its prestige vis-a-vis the increasingly feckless Palestinian Authority and its president, Mahmoud Abbas, who seems a bystander to the daily bloodletting.

Hamas rejected an initial ceasefire proposed by Egypt because it didn't do enough to change the status quo in Gaza. On Friday, after days of painstaking negotiation to reach a 72-hour break in the fighting, it took only 90 minutes for Hamas to violate it, killing two Israeli soldiers and apparently capturing another. It was a raid that suggests a growing divide between Hamas's military wing on the ground in Gaza and its political leadership in Qatar, which negotiated the deal. Whatever the case, it seems certain to further escalate the violence.

For Israel, which stumbled into a war that it clearly didn't want to wage, the issue is not one of fighting or not fighting, but, rather, how aggressively they should do it. There are those, particularly the prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, who want nothing more than to end this war before it spirals even more out of control, fearful of the increasing diplomatic costs and the potential for a full-scale humanitarian crisis in Gaza. But there is another side, what JJ Goldberg of the Jewish daily Forward calls the "smash Hamas factions". These are the far-rightwing members of Netanyahu's governing coalition who want to see Israel continue its Gaza offensive until Hamas is defeated or at the very least incapable of waging any serious attack on Israeli civilian targets. As the far-right Naftali Bennett, the country's economy minister, put it last week: "Don't give in and don't stop until you achieve that goal... strike at Hamas

mercilessly... until demilitarisation, until a victory... until we finish the work."

To be sure, this strategy would be both strategically infeasible and likely militarily impossible. Such a goal can only realistically be achieved with reoccupation by Israeli troops, a scenario that is unlikely to have much public support in Israel. Yet, the reported capture of an Israeli soldier and the violation of the ceasefire will put enormous pressure on Netanyahu to ramp up military operations. The consequences of that decision – and the extent to which Israel finds itself pulled into a deeper conflict with Hamas – is an open question.

The more Israel pushes into Gaza the **harder** it will be to **extricate** itself. But for Netanyahu and his increasingly divided governing coalition, political pressure only moves in one direction – more violence.

Traditionally, **this is where the United States would enter** from stage left, as Washington has done so many times in the past, to save both sides from themselves. In the present environment, however, **that will be no easy task**, in part **because neither side seems very interested** in heeding America's advice.

Indeed, John **Kerry**, the secretary of state, **has already watched two diplomatic efforts** to end the violence **blow up in his face**. The first came two weeks ago when Israeli officials leaked a proposed ceasefire agreement from Kerry that it claimed had been rejected by the Israeli cabinet. In reality, the agreement appears to have been a list of ideas for a possible ceasefire, which was leaked to embarrass Kerry. The outrage among American officials at being used as a punchbag by the Israelis was palpable. The second failure was the breakdown of last week's ceasefire, which the secretary of state helped make possible.

While it's unlikely that the indefatigable Kerry will be deterred, the inability of the US to stop the fighting has been a tough blow to US diplomacy and a further reminder that both Israelis and Palestinians are more interested in doing what they believe is in their narrow interests than they are in listening to the United States.

In an ideal world, the punishment that Israel is inflicting on Hamas would give the Jewish state greater incentive, even impetus, to reach out to the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank, more secure in the fact that the hardline Hamas has been severely weakened. In that ideal world, the Israelis would realise that fighting wars in Gaza every few years is not a long-term strategy for success; and that the only enduring way to keep Israel secure is to seek a political resolution to the conflict.

But ideal world and the Middle East are words that rarely, if ever, go together. And truth be told, even if Israel offered an olive branch it's not clear that Abbas could accept it, in light of the thousands of his countryman who have been killed by Israeli bombs.

Instead, while **further escalation is a possibility**, the best and probably short-term solution is that the Palestinian Authority will be given control of the checkpoints between Gaza and Egypt. The closure will be lessened somewhat, which will give Hamas a moral victory (that plus the high casualties they inflicted on Israeli military forces) and Israel can step back behind the Gaza border after destroying Hamas's tunnels and claim they achieved their strategic objectives.

But for all sides **it will be a hollow, if meaningless outcome that will merely serve as the latest flare-up of fighting** – and needless bloodshed – **before the next one** ... and the one after that... and the one after that.

So how does this end? Your guess is as good as mine. Increasingly, **it's hard to escape the sad and horrifying reality that maybe, it never will.**

() The one-state solution is utopian and unlikely. Two-state solution better solves violence and military vulnerability.

An on-point response to Leverett and Leverett

Wolf 14 – Albert B. Wolf, Fellow with the Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2014 (“A Two State Solution Is the Worst Solution—Except for All the Others,” The National Interest, July 14th, <http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/two-state-solution-the-worst-solution%E2%80%94except-all-the-others-10872> | ADM)

Given the “facts on the ground,” **Flynt and Hillary Mann Leverett argue that Washington should recognize the two-state solution is dead** and get on with burying it. **There are two problems** with this. **A one-state solution would be a calamity** for both sides. Furthermore, **the so-called “facts on the ground” as interpreted by the Leveretts hardly make it inevitable.**

While the Kerry Framework collapsed, **this does not make a one-state solution the next logical step**. The historian Benny Morris points out that just as two-state solutions have failed, so have one-state solutions to the Arab-Israeli dispute. Rather than leading to a lasting peace, **a one-state solution would transform the former British mandate into another Yugoslavia.**

The international system has been repeatedly characterized as anarchic, where the life of states can be “nasty, brutish and short.” However, warring groups have greater protection under anarchy than if they were forced to live under the same roof.

Neither side can credibly commit to the safety and security of the other. If a single, binational state were created, the Palestinians would form the majority. However, it is unlikely that the Jewish minority would be able to trust such a government. **A unitary state would demand the Jewish minority disarm its military forces** in exchange for a binational one,

leaving them vulnerable to future attacks. (Similarly, the Palestinian side would have no recourse other than violence if the Jewish minority decided to renege on its end of the bargain.)

Under a two-state solution, both sides can mitigate the consequences of receiving the sucker's payoff should one of them decide to cheat on an agreement. They can bolster their defenses, form counter-balancing alliances, and raise (or hold onto) their national defense forces. They can raise the costs of aggression by bringing in third-party monitors. These are just a handful of the strategies states use to ensure that their rivals comply with their agreements. While none is foolproof, they afford greater protection for both sides than unilateral disarmament and a one-state solution.

On the fourth day of Operation Protective Edge, Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu reiterated several of his longstanding positions in a press conference, including his support for a two-state solution. The facts on the ground give credence to several options that would ultimately separate the two sides.

() US is key to a two-state solution – that solves Iranian nuclear strikes on Israel

Rubin 13, Debra Rubin is a staff writer and geopolitical analyst, ("Kurtzer sees benefits of two-state solution", <http://njjewishnews.com/article/16107/kurtzer-sees-benefits-of-two-state-solution#.U9z0zfIdXF4>, 1/28/2013) Kerwin

The failure to reach a lasting peace with the Palestinians not only dooms the two sides to a future of endless war, but weakens Israel's ability to fend off perhaps its biggest threat — Iran.

That assessment was offered by former U.S. ambassador to Egypt and Israel, Daniel Kurtzer, Jan. 12 at the Orthodox Forum of Edison and Highland Park. Speaking at Congregation Ohr Torah in Edison, Kurtzer said a peace agreement could be used by the Israelis "to build an alliance against Iran" with moderate Arab countries. An accord, including a two-state solution, would allow the Israelis to focus their full attention on Iran, a country whose nuclear aspirations are being viewed with increasing alarm by its neighbors. Other countries in the region may be willing to work with Israel on containing their common enemy, said Kurtzer, but are prevented from doing so by the political constraints surrounding the Palestinians. At a conference he attended more than two years ago, Kurtzer said, "the Arab states made it quite clear the concerns they had were not with Israel, but Iran." "They would have been just as happy to work with Israel as not work with Israel," he said, but were concerned about the reaction such a move would generate on the "Arab street." More than 20 years earlier, he said, former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin accurately predicted that Iran would become Israel's greatest security challenge. Kurtzer said it was "imperative that Israel rid itself of the Palestinian issue" if it was to meet the threat. Kurtzer, a professor of Middle Eastern policy studies at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, said that while Rabin was "a hard-headed military leader" he was also a pragmatist. Not only has Rabin's theory been borne out, if anything, the Middle East has become more unstable with Syria engaged in a bloody civil war, and the "Arab Spring" giving way to turmoil, said Kurtzer. "It's all the more imperative, all the more urgent to have a solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict," he explained. A Palestinian state would also nullify Palestinian claims of a "right of return" to their pre-1948 homes, "since they can't have a right to return to what is now recognized as Israel." However, with the recent wave of violence and the complicated political landscape, peace seems more unattainable than ever. Kurtzer acknowledged, and likely will require the "robust" involvement of the United States. Unfortunately, the United States has not been actively involved in the peace process for some time and its political parties are badly split.

Extension – Uniqueness Overwhelms the Link

The two-state solution is over. The failed negotiations functionally represented a hard deadline that makes future diplomacy useless.

Drezner 14 – Daniel W. Drezner, professor of international politics at Tufts University, nonresident senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, Ph.D. degree from Stanford University, 2014 ("The two-state solution, R.I.P." Washington Post, July 21st, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2014/07/21/the-two-state-solution-r-i-p/> | ADM)

5) **Two-state solution, R.I.P.** The most sobering statement of the entire story comes close to the beginning:

[I]n the weeks since assuming office, Kerry had become convinced that the **parties didn't have much longer to craft a two-state solution**. As he would say at a House hearing the following month: "I think we have some period of time—in one to one-and-a-half to two years—or **it's over**."

Well, it's over. What's depressing about the story is how all of the **two-state advocates are either getting old fast or politically marginalized**. Netanyahu has now **explicitly rejected the two-state solution**, and the space for **political debate** in Israel and the occupied territories **has shrunk/evaporated**. The result is a stable equilibrium of **perpetual violence** in which the leaders of both sides politically profit from conflict. Reading the story, you can understand why Kerry thought what he thought about the window for the two-state solution. For at least two **decades**, a **key assumption** to U.S. policy on this question **is that the final outcome would be two states** within the territory that Israel currently controls. **That assumption will have to be revised** – and US policy in the region will have to be revised **along with it**.

() Hamas's existence makes the two-state solution impossible

Alderman 7/31, Geoffrey Alderman is a historian, political advisor, academic, and journalist. He was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and is a Life Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. He has a PhD from Oxford University. ("Death of the two state solution", <http://www.thejc.com/comment-and-debate/columnists/121043/death-two-state-solution, 7/31/2014>) Kerwin

The two-state solution has a long history. It might be said to have originated in proposals dating from as far back as 1937. In 1974 the UN voted in favour of "two states, Israel and Palestine," and this formulation – often expressed as "two states for two peoples," and re-endorsed by the UN as recently as last year - has long been touted by politicians and pundits the world over. It is the mantra repeated ad nauseam by the likes of David Cameron and Ed Miliband, not least because it enables them to avoid confronting the religious nature of the conflict, rooted as it is, and as Hamas (a Sunni affiliate) has always insisted, on the Islamist refusal to countenance a Jewish state anywhere in the historic Realm of Islam. By deliberately firing rockets into central Israel, and thereby bringing about the temporary closure of Ben-Gurion Airport, **Hamas has killed off the two-state solution**. This solution is dead. **No Israeli government is ever going to agree to the creation of an independent Palestinian state** based on the West Bank, **ruled by a regime of which Hamas is a part**. Rockets from Gaza are bad enough. But **with launch-pads in Ramallah and Jericho**, Hamas would be able to close Ben-Gurion Airport permanently. Greater Tel Aviv would be within easy reach of Hamas's Iranian-made missiles. Jewish Jerusalem would be the easiest of targets. **The most that Mahmoud Abbas can now hope for is Israeli agreement to a limited Palestinian enclave** on the West Bank, a sort of glorified county council, internally self-governing, totally demilitarised, and with a continued Israeli military presence in the Jordan Valley. **Hardly the two-state solution**, is it? Meanwhile, throughout Europe, we have witnessed manifestations of EU citizens baying for Jewish blood. In the Paris suburb of Sarcelles a supposedly peaceful anti-Israeli demonstration degenerated into a min-pogrom. "They are not screaming 'death to the Israelis,'" explained Roger Cuikerman, head of Crif, the representative body of French Jewry, "they are screaming 'death to the Jews.'" In Germany (Germany!), a howling mob demanded that Jews (Jews, not Zionists, please note) were "cowardly pigs" and should be gassed! In Belgium protesters chanted "kill the Jews." All this Hamas has achieved. Its leadership must be delighted.

No two-state solution as long as Hamas exists

Rosinger 7/31, George Rosinger is a writer and geopolitical analyst, ("While Hamas endures, peace in Israel unlikely", <http://www.news-press.com/story/opinion/contributors/2014/07/31/hamas-endures-peace-israel-unlikely/13392695/>, 7/31/2014) Kerwin

Israel's critics have lost sight of the fact that **Hamas is a terrorist organization whose goal**, as stated in its charter, **is the destruction of Israel**. In keeping with their goal, **Hamas has consistently refused to recognize Israel's existence**. They do not **want a two-state solution** but rather one state that **excludes Israel**. Hamas has an extremist ideology similar to that of al-Qaida. **Hamas is to Israel as al-Qaida is to the United States**. What would Israel's critics have to say if al-Qaida, rather than Hamas, was in Gaza? Critics contend that Israel has killed too many of Gaza's civilians. Unfortunately, the nature of war is that civilians invariably are killed. U.S. forces in Afghanistan killed countless civilians. The same was true in Iraq. The U.S. has claimed that the casualties were accidents or errors and there was no sustained international outcry. Although Israel attempts to limit civilian casualties, Gaza is densely populated. Casualties occur even though Israel warns the residents of Gaza to leave areas that it plans to target. As is the case in all wars, Israel has made some mistakes. This has been exacerbated by Hamas' practice of using human shields. Reporters and United Nations representatives on the ground in Gaza have reported that sites where civilians have been killed were used by Hamas to fire rockets at Israel or to store rockets. On July 25, Fox News noted that there were reports on social media that Hamas threatened reporters after reporting instances where human shields were used. Hamas is demanding that as a condition of a lasting cease-fire, Israel must open its borders with Gaza. It should be recalled that **before Israel built its much-criticized wall, terrorists were sending suicide bombers (some of whom were women and children) across the border into Israel**. Since then, **Hamas has been using the crossings to bring goods and material into Gaza**, which they claimed were needed for construction. It is known that they not only used tons of concrete to build a network of tunnels to bring in weapons, but also to cross into Israel to **kill or kidnap Israeli citizens**. The tunnels have enabled Hamas to bring in an estimated 10,000 rockets and other weaponry. According to the U.K.'s The Daily Telegraph, Hamas has paid North Korea for missiles and communications equipment in an arms deal worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. **Hamas has received large amounts of money from countries such as Qatar to accumulate weapons, build tunnels, and command centers instead of using the funds to better the lives of the people of Gaza**. Consequently, Gaza is mired in poverty and has a high unemployment rate. **Because Hamas is filled with hate, and has no desire for a two-state solution, peace with Israel in the near future is unlikely**.

Two-state solution won't ever happen – Israel is committed to destroying Palestinians

Bennis 7/24, Samir Bennis is a political analyst. He received a Ph.D. in international relations from the University of Provence in France. He also holds a Master's degree in political science from the University of Toulouse I, a Master's degree in Iberian studies from the University of Toulouse II, a Master's degree in diplomatic studies from Center for Diplomatic and Strategic Studies in Paris and a bachelor's degree in Spanish studies from the University of Fez. ("Why the Two-State Solution is Wishful Thinking", <http://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2014/07/135219/why-the-two-state-solution-is-wishful-thinking/>, 7/24/2014) Kerwin

Fez – **For Zionists who view all of historic Palestine as their God-given land, there is no room for a reasonable settlement to the dispute over the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza, for they believe that they are simply a biblical real estate endowment for the Jewish people, notwithstanding international law and UN resolutions. Their religiously-based argument, coupled with the ongoing Israeli onslaught on Gaza, convinces me more than ever that it will be virtually impossible to achieve peace in the Middle East and that the establishment of a Palestinian state, side by side with Israel, remains wishful thinking at best.** How can it be otherwise when the balance of power is in favor of Israel and its Western supporters, chief of which is the United States, along with the United Kingdom and the European Union? No matter what Israeli leaders do and no matter how horrible are the crimes they commit against the Palestinian people, they know beforehand that they have an international carte blanche and the so-called international community will do nothing to compel them to abide by international law, nor by international humanitarian law, nor respect its commitments towards the Palestinians. A dysfunctional UN that turned into a statement-making machine **Every time there is an escalation of the situation in the occupied**

Palestinian territories, people call upon the United Nations to shoulder its responsibility to preserve international peace and security and protect the Palestinians. However, the Security Council, the main UN body entrusted with preserving international peace and security, is crippled by the veto power and control by countries that show unwavering support to Israel. Is it possible that the US will ever condemn the barbaric acts committed by the Israeli army

against Palestinian children, women, and the elderly? Let's be realistic, the meetings held every now and then by the Security Council or by other UN entities concerning the situation in Gaza or in the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory, are served up at best for media consumption, and for maintaining the status quo, which is only beneficial to Israel and allows it more time to build more illegal settlements. Nothing concrete is done to protect the Palestinians or to protect and preserve their inalienable rights, nor is Israel held accountable for the war crimes and war against humanity it continually perpetrates against the Palestinians. Washington and other Western countries, don't show any sympathy or concern for the plight of the Palestinians. Instead they keep putting the blame on Hamas and label it as the main culprit in the death of the civilians who elected it. The cowardly and outrageous leniency of the "international community" in applying the norms of international law to Israel is based on inaccurate and erroneous propaganda that Israelis are the victims of the "extremism and terrorism of Palestinians," and that Israelis are just "defending themselves." Through a powerful corporate media that virtually always sympathizes with Israel and refrains from objectively criticizing its apartheid-like policies, the world's public opinion has been saturated with the false narrative that Israel and the Palestinians are on an equal footing as fairly matched combatants. The Bias of Western media In addition to ignoring the indisputable fact that Israel is not openly occupying, but colonizing a territory in violation of international law and countless UN resolutions, those influencing public opinion claim that Hamas has been inflicting significant damage on Israel. Yet notwithstanding the skewed manner in which American and European media depict this festering conflict, reinforcing the lie that Israelis are defending themselves against Palestinian "terrorists," these claims cannot withstand objective scrutiny. Israel has been besieging and terrorizing the Palestinian people in the Gaza for the past 7 years with total impunity, while benefiting from the complicity of an undemocratic and ineffective United Nations. While Israel claims that Hamas is terrorizing the Jewish population, the facts on the ground prove otherwise. Since the start of the recent escalation on July 8, 2014, at least 620 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli attacks, including children, women and the elderly, while more than 4,000 have been injured. 120 people, most of whom are non-combatant civilians, were killed in Shujayea just on Sunday, while more than 300 were wounded. In spite of all the daily damage and fatalities inflicted by Israel against the Palestinian

civilian population, the international community (i.e, the five permanent members of the security Council) still insist on calling on the Palestinians to resume negotiations with the Israeli occupation

authorities, with the view, as they say, to reaching a two-state solution. The biased statements in the UN Security Council by the American, the British Representatives, and the French representative or the UN Secretary General, would lead one to believe that Israel is the victim and the Palestinians are the aggressors. These same voices call on the Palestinians to resume direct talks with the Israelis, knowing very well that Israel continues, among other things, to construct illegal settlements aimed at undermining any future continuous or contiguous Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. A UN Secretary that fails to live up to its moral responsibility I was shocked by the statement made by Ban Ki-moon during the extraordinary meeting held by the Security Council on July 10th. Instead of shouldering his moral responsibility and being unequivocal in condemning the systematic crimes committed by Israel against the civilian population in Gaza, he simply treated Hamas on an equal footing with Israel, the occupying power, and called upon it to stop firing its rockets on Israel. More still, while he expressed no condemnation whatsoever of Israeli indiscriminate air strikes against defenseless civilians, he pointed out that he had repeatedly condemned Hamas's launching of rockets into Gaza, describing the Israeli response as "tough." "I have consistently condemned indiscriminate rocket fire from Gaza into Israel. At the same time, the excessive use of force and endangering of civilian lives are also intolerable," Ban Ki-moon said. While adopting this position, Ki-Moon seems to have forgotten that Israel is the only country in the world that apparently is above international law, although the only aggressor that is committing war crimes against the Palestinians. These were the findings of the United Nations fact-finding mission on Gaza, which concluded that the Israeli onslaught on Palestinians in December 2008-January 2009 amounted to "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity." "We came to the conclusion, on the basis of the facts we found, that there was strong evidence to establish that numerous serious violations of international law, both humanitarian law and human rights law, were committed by Israel during the military operations in Gaza," the head of the mission, Justice Richard Goldstone, told the press in September 2009. "The mission concluded that actions amounting to war crimes and possibly, in some respects, crimes against humanity, were committed by the Israel Defense Force (IDF)," he said. Should we expect the UN to live up to its moral duty? After nearly two decades following the Oslo Agreement and Israel's lip service paid to establishing peace, Israel continues to pursue its settlement policies in the West Bank and continues its aggression against the civilian population. The question that every sane, honest and peace-loving individual must ask is how

can we ensure the success of negotiations, if any, in light of the heinous crimes committed by Israel against unarmed Palestinian non-combatants? We must also question the inability of the Security Council to compel Israel to comply with international law and the relevant UN Resolutions regarding peace in the Middle East. On what solid foundation can these negotiations be built? How can the negotiations bear fruit while Israel is still holding thousands

of detainees and subjecting them to harsh and unfair conditions? How can one speak of building confidence between the Palestinians and Israelis when Israel continues to impose an inhumane, suffocating, and illegal blockade of the Gaza Strip? I leave it up to the readers to wonder if we can still talk about peace talks and confidence-building with the Israelis in light of the decades long subjugation of the Palestinian people. As far as I am concerned, I am more convinced than ever that peace will not be achieved with the Israelis in the present climate of international laissez-faire, and that the two-state solution is a mirage that will never materialize into reality.

Extension – Violence Now

The violence will escalate for a prolonged period and international efforts fail.

Mitnick and El-Ghobashy 14 – Joshua, reporting on Israel/Palestine & the Mideast for the Wall Street Journal and the Christian Science Monitor, Tamer, Middle East Correspondent based in Cairo for the Wall Street Journal, 2014 ("Israel Says It Is Escalating Gaza Campaign," Wall Street Journal, July 29th, <http://online.wsj.com/articles/israeli-strikes-on-gaza-break-lull-1406551863> | ADM)

Israel's leaders said they were escalating the military campaign in Gaza and told the country to prepare for a prolonged operation, defying international demands for an immediate cease-fire after Hamas militants broke a Muslim holiday lull.

The military chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Benny Gantz, said **Israel's assault** on Gaza's Hamas rulers **was being "intensified"** after three weeks of fighting that has cost more than 1,100 lives.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in a televised address, gave no sign the military would go beyond its stated goals—degrading Hamas's rocket arsenal and finding and destroying a network of cross-border tunnels that fighters use to infiltrate Israel. The military needs about another week to accomplish that, officials said.

"We will not finish the mission, we will not finish the operation, without neutralizing the tunnels, which have the sole purpose of annihilating our citizens and killing our children," the prime minister said. He told Israelis to brace for a prolonged fight.

As he spoke, the military sent messages instructing thousands of Palestinians living on the outskirts of Gaza City to leave their homes and take shelter in the city center—an apparent prelude to an assault on suspected Hamas positions in civilian neighborhoods.

Just before midnight, **missiles struck** several **buildings in Gaza** City, some of **the heaviest bombardment since the assault** began three weeks ago. Flares lit the moonless sky, followed by strikes that rattled and broke windows several blocks away.

Acrid smoke hung over the city that houses many of Gaza's municipal buildings and its commercial center.

Later, flares lighted up the midnight sky over Gaza City, accompanied by repeated explosions that rattled windows.

There had been a brief lull in fighting from Sunday afternoon as Israel eased up on strikes for the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr, which began on Monday.

But Mr. Netanyahu ordered a resumption of attacks after Hamas struck two military targets inside Israel on Monday, lobbing a mortar that killed four soldiers at a makeshift base 4 miles from the Gaza border and popping up from a cross-border tunnel to open fire on a military patrol. The military said it killed five militants in a firefight at the tunnel opening, and that five of its soldiers were killed.

In Gaza City, two blasts shook a residential neighborhood called Beach Camp, killing eight children and two adults, Gaza's health ministry said.

Both Israel and Hamas denied responsibility. Palestinian officials blamed an Israeli airstrike. Israel's military released an aerial photo diagram purporting to show the paths of four rockets fired from Gaza, with one of them landing at Beach Camp.

Hamas responded defiantly to Mr. Netanyahu's comments.

"His threats do not scare Hamas or the Palestinian people," said Samy Abu Zohry, a spokesman for the Islamist group that governs Gaza. "The [Israeli] occupation will pay the price for the massacres against civilians and children."

Mr. Netanyahu and the Hamas leadership each appear to have strong support at home for continuing the fight. But the mounting death toll has put both under international pressure to stop fighting and negotiate a deal that would ease severe restrictions by Egypt and Israel on Gaza's borders, while guaranteeing Israel's security.

The Gaza health ministry said 1,079 Palestinians have been killed since the conflict began on July 8. Most were civilians, according to the United Nations and Palestinian officials. Fifty-three Israeli soldiers have died and three civilians have been killed by rocket fire in Israel, the military said.

After the blasts in Gaza City, Naji Adeen said he found his wounded son Ahmed in a pool of blood and took him to a hospital for treatment.

"We saw pieces of children," he said. "There were so many ugly things there."

Mohamed El Helw, 36 years old, stood at the hospital next to a gurney carrying a bloodied white body bag, weeping. He said the bag contained the remains of his father, who had gone out to buy treats for his grandchildren for the holiday.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon singled out Israel, accusing it of "pummeling" Gazans with "indiscriminate destruction" and warned the Jewish state to fulfill its obligations as "an occupying power" to protect civilians.

The U.N. chief demanded that Israel and Hamas end the violence "in the name of humanity." **He accused Mr. Netanyahu** and Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal **of being "morally wrong"** for letting their people get killed. Mr. Ban said he spoke to Mr. Netanyahu on Monday, urging him to accept a cease-fire first, then to address the root causes of the conflict. An emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council on Monday called for an "immediate and unconditional humanitarian cease-fire," echoing President Barack Obama's appeal in a phone call to Mr. Netanyahu on Sunday.

Mr. **Obama's call** to Mr. Netanyahu **stoked concern among Israelis** about a rift with the U.S. that **could complicate** the search for a **cease-fire**. Tensions are still raw after Israel's cabinet on Thursday rejected a proposal for a one-week cease-fire by Secretary of State John Kerry, saying it addressed Hamas's demands for open borders but not Israel's demand for the demilitarization of Gaza.

Cease-fires and UN mandates fail – conflict will continue and operations will expand.

Raghavan et al 14 – Sudarsan Raghavan, bureau chief in Africa for Washington Post, William Booth, Jerusalem bureau chief, Griff Witte, London bureau chief, 2014 (“How a 72-hour truce in Gaza fell apart in less than 2 hours,” Washington Post, August 1st, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/israel-hamas-agree-to-72-hour-humanitarian-cessation/2014/08/01/059f1ff8-194e-11e4-9e3b-7f2f110c6265_story.html | ADM)

GAZA CITY — **It was the start of a three-day truce**, the best hope yet to end a 25-day-old war that has taken an enormous toll on both Palestinians and Israelis.

On Friday morning, Israeli troops were in the southern Gaza Strip preparing to destroy a Hamas tunnel, said Israeli military officials. Suddenly, Palestinian militants emerged from a shaft. They included a suicide bomber, who detonated his explosive device. In the chaos, two Israeli soldiers were killed. The militants grabbed 2nd Lt. Hadar Goldin, 23, and pushed him back through the tunnel, according to the Israeli account.

Within minutes, **the war was back**

“The cease-fire is over” declared Lt. Col. Peter Lerner, a senior spokesman for the Israel Defense Forces. Ground operations will continue, he said, **“and our aircraft are in the sky as we speak.”**

By Friday afternoon, Israel was heavily shelling areas near the border city of Rafah, where the soldier’s capture occurred. Hamas officials were disputing the timeline of the clashes, accusing Israel of breaking the cease-fire. And the United States and the United Nations, **the architects of the truce, were condemning the killing of the two soldiers** and Goldin’s abduction **while seeking ways to save the peace talks** scheduled to take place in Cairo over the weekend.

Goldin’s fate, military analysts said, could alter the course of the conflict, with Israel either slowing its offensive to negotiate his return or widening its operations, pushing deeper into the Gaza Strip to eradicate Hamas, and leading to the likelihood of greater civilian casualties.

Israel’s bombardment Friday in the Rafah area **killed 52 Palestinians and injured more than 350**, said Gaza Health Ministry officials, bringing the Palestinian death toll to more than 1,600 since the conflict began July 8. Sixty-three Israeli soldiers have been killed and more than 400 wounded. Three civilians have been killed by mortar rounds or rockets fired by militants from Gaza into Israel. President Obama, speaking in the White House briefing room, urged Hamas and other Palestinian factions to release Goldin, saying that was an essential condition for a durable truce. He added that Israel had “a right to defend itself.”

“I think **it’s going to be very hard to put a cease-fire together** again if Israel and the international community can’t feel confident that Hamas can follow through,” Obama said. “When they sign on a cease-fire they’re claiming to speak for all Palestinian factions. . . . If they don’t have control of them . . . then it’s hard for the Israelis to feel confident that a cease-fire can actually be honored.” Israel said the capture took place an hour and a half after the truce began Friday morning. It said the officer was taken in the no man’s land in the seaside enclave, east of Rafah. Hamas officials said the clashes- occurred before the truce began. But there was no immediate acknowledgment that the Palestinian militants, who seized Gaza in 2007, were holding Goldin.

In a statement early Saturday morning, the military wing of Hamas denied abducting Goldin and suggested that he may have been killed in the fighting.

Both sides accused each other on Friday **of breaking the cease-fire**. Sami Abu Zuhri, a Hamas spokesman,

declared that Israel was misleading the world to justify “its violation of the truce and to cover up their savage massacres in Rafah.”

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Secretary of State John F. Kerry in a telephone call Friday afternoon that the cease-fire was broken by Hamas and that the Islamist group and other Palestinian militant factions “will bear the consequences of their actions,” according to Netanyahu’s office.

In a statement issued after his phone conversation with Netanyahu, **Kerry reproached Hamas for breaking assurances given to the United States and the United Nations**. He called on Hamas to release the captive immediately and unconditionally. “It would be a tragedy if this outrageous attack leads to more suffering and loss of life on both sides of this conflict,” he said. While Qatar and Turkey played a role in confirming Hamas’s agreement to honor a cease-fire, the United Nations also had “assurances we had received directly” from the Hamas leadership, U.N. Undersecretary Jeffrey Feltman said Friday.

Saying that **the United Nations was “profoundly disappointed”** that the lull in fighting “seems to have lasted for maybe 90 minutes this morning,” Feltman described it as a “tragic loss of opportunity for both sides.”

The 72-hour cease-fire had been designed not only to allow humanitarian relief for both sides but also to pave the way for a durable truce through the discussion of demands from both sides in Cairo.

"I hope we can get back to that," Feltman said. "But it's going to be extremely difficult in the situation that we see in the Gaza Strip now, particularly with the captured Israeli soldier."

On Friday morning, after the truce began at 8 a.m. local time, Gazans emerged from their homes to shop or visit families. Others went back to their neighborhoods to assess the damage to their houses, retrieve belongings and bury their dead. Fishermen jumped into their boats and headed to sea while children played on the beach and frolicked in the waves.

By midday, as the news spread of the collapse of the truce, they fled back to their homes and the streets were once again empty.

Israeli analysts said **Netanyahu** and his top advisers **will** have to **consider expanding the operation in Gaza** — even if that was not their original intent.

"It puts the cabinet in a very awkward position," said Meir Elran, a former deputy director of military intelligence and current researcher at the Institute for National Security Studies in Tel Aviv. "So far the idea was to do away with the tunnels and extract ourselves from Gaza. But **there are a lot of calls** within Israel **to expand the pressure.**"

Elran said that could take the form of a much more aggressive ground operation, which he described as "very, very limited" until now. Shaul Shay, a former deputy head of Israel's National Security Council, said Goldin's abduction represented a major success for Hamas, becoming a source of leverage, both in crafting a truce and negotiating an exchange for the release of Hamas members held in Israeli jails. "From their point of view, it's a significant achievement — maybe their most significant achievement in this conflict," said Shay, a senior research fellow at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies.

He said that **rescuing Goldin will** inevitably **force Israel to shift its focus** and direct energies toward finding the missing soldier, **prolonging a war that has already stretched longer** than Israel's two other major conflicts in Gaza against Hamas, in 2008-2009 and 2012.

Extension – One-State Bad

A one-state solution is a disaster that delegitimizes Israel and destroys democracy in the region.

Dershowitz 12 – Alan Dershowitz, prominent scholar on United States constitutional law and criminal law, Felix Frankfurter Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, 2012 ("The Case Against the Left and Right One-State Solution," *The Huffington Post*, March 21st, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/alan-dershowitz/the-case-against-the-left_b_1370294.html | ADM)

Both the extreme left and the extreme right are now calling for a one state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Of course the one state solution each seeks is completely different: the left wants yet another Arab state in place of Israel; the right wants a Jewish state that encompasses what is now the West Bank, in place of any Palestinian state. Both are prescriptions for undemocratic disasters and for the ultimate delegitimation of Israel as the democratic nation state of the Jewish people.

I have advocated a two-state solution, based on secure borders for Israel, since the early 1970s, when I debated Noam Chomsky, who was then an advocate of a secular bi-national state. I advocated a version of what was then known as "the Alon Plan," which, in effect, would have annexed portions of the captured territories that were necessary for Israel's security but would have precluded Israeli civilian settlements in other captured areas. This plan was consistent with Security Council Resolution 242, which allowed for some territorial annexation by Israel to achieve secure borders. I did not, and do not now, advocate a return to the indefensible 1967 lines, which reflected nothing more than temporary truce lines following the attack on Israel by the surrounding Arab states in 1948.

Now the hard left wants to eliminate these borders and create one state which would soon become another Arab Muslim state in which Jews would be a minority, while the soft left wants Israel to return all the territory captured in the defensive war of 1967, with mutually agreed acre-for-acre land swaps (to which the Palestinians now seem unwilling to agree).

The hard right, on the other hand, wants Israel to annex and settle the entire West Bank, make it part of Israel, but deny its Arab residents the right to vote and become citizens. (If the hard right position were to grant voting and citizenship to the Arab residents of the West Bank, they would be agreeing with the hard left's position on a "democratic" one state solution that would quickly turn into an undemocratic Muslim state based on Sharia law, as specified in the Palestinian Constitution).

Both one state solutions would end in Israel's delegitimation as the democratic nation-state of the Jewish people. That's why the vast majority of Israelis, as well as every centrist Israeli leader, rejects both the left and right wing versions of the one-state solution.

An Israel that would permanently deny millions of Arab residents the rights of citizenship would become illegitimate not only in the eyes of the international community, but even more important, in the eyes of most Israelis and Israeli supporters around the world. Israel would cease to be a democracy if nearly half of its residents could not vote. Some on the hard right would "solve" this problem by expelling the Arab residents of the West Bank. That too is not a solution that is consistent with democratic values.

In a recent article entitled "Disputing Dershowitz," Martin Sherman tries to make the hard right case against the two state solution. In doing so, he never even addresses the issue of democracy. This is perhaps because he doesn't care whether his "one state" is or is not democratic. But the vast majority of Israelis, and their leaders and supporters, do. But because Sherman doesn't value democracy, he seems willing to impose his undemocratic solution in an undemocratic manner on unwilling Israelis and Palestinians. He makes the absurd argument that the Palestinians are not a people based on the fact that they don't have a unique language, script, religion, heritage or history. By that standard, the United States should still be part of Great Britain, because the American Colonists, who were being denied full citizenship, also lacked those characteristics. The Palestinians are a people because they regard themselves as such and seek to govern themselves. They will secure self-government, however, only if they come to the bargaining table, with no preconditions, and with the realization that they must accept borders and other conditions that assure Israel's security. They must also realize that they are not coming to the negotiating table in the same bargaining position as the Israelis. The Israelis secured the West Bank after winning a defensive war started by Jordan, in whose place the Palestinians now stand. By demanding preconditions from the Israelis to receive what they claim is their land, the Palestinians remind us what Abba Eban said in 1967 when the Arabs rejected Security Council Resolution 242:

"This was the first war in history which has ended with the victors suing for peace and the vanquished calling for unconditional surrender."

Two-state solution is good – ensures Israeli security, legitimacy, and stability

Walt 10, Stephen Walt, Belfer Professor of International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, (“Enhancing Security Through a Two-State Solution”, <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/news-events/publications/impact-newsletter/archives/summer-2010/enhancing-security-through-a-two-state-solution>, 2010) Kerwin

Israel’s security landscape has changed dramatically since the country’s creation in 1948. Since then, Israel has won four wars against neighboring countries, received substantial military aid from the United States, and negotiated peace treaties with two of its former enemies. Today, it faces new types of security threats — short-range missile attacks from Hamas in Gaza, stronger missile attacks from Hezbollah in Lebanon, and terrorist attacks against Israeli troops in the occupied territories or in the homeland. Iran’s potential nuclear capabilities might pose a threat to Israel as well. But if the two-state solution — an independent Palestine existing adjacent to Israel — becomes

a reality, Israel stands to benefit from improved security and potentially from improved Middle East relations, according to a research paper authored by Stephen Walt, Belfer Professor of International Affairs. The paper is part of a larger monograph, “Israel-Palestine: Two States for Two Peoples — If Not Now, When?” written by the Boston Study Group on Middle East Peace.

A two-state solution would also improve Israel’s security vis-à-vis Iran, according to Walt. “By removing Iran’s main source of leverage,” he writes, “and by facilitating rapprochement between Israel and countries such as Saudi Arabia (that have their own concerns about Iran), a two-state solution may in fact be the best way to minimize the threat that Iran now presents.” In addition, a negotiation with Palestine would improve Israel’s reputation in the Middle East and help Israel reach its goal of “enduring legitimacy” in the region. Given its nuclear arsenal and conventional

military strength, occupying the West Bank no longer serves an essential security purpose for Israel. Israeli forces should relinquish the occupied territories and allow the creation of a viable Palestinian state, a step that would help re-legitimize Israel in the eyes of the international community. Many countries in the Middle East refuse to acknowledge Israel’s existence, but most have pledged to do so if a two-state solution is reached. “By removing the most serious obstacle to regional acceptance,” writes Walt, “a two-state solution would make a mutually beneficial and enduring peace possible.”

Extension – Solves Iran Strike

US support for Israel solves inevitable 1st strike on Iran

Pollak 7/31, Joel B. Pollak is Senior Editor-at-Large and in-house counsel at Breitbart News and is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School. He is a former Research Fellow at the Hudson Institute. ("ANALYSIS: U.S. FAILURES IN GAZA MAKE ISRAEL-IRAN WAR MORE LIKELY", <http://www.breitbart.com/Big-Peace/2014/07/31/Analysis-U-S-Failures-in-Gaza-Make-War-with-Iran-More-Likely>, 7/31/2014) Kerwin

Amidst the many foreign policy stumbles--and occasional successes--of the Obama administration, there have been few as embarrassing as the failure in the ongoing Gaza conflict. No agency has been spared. The State Department has looked incompetent, with John Kerry's failed ceasefire mission that alienated all relevant parties. The Pentagon provided weapons, but its intelligence assessments have been absurd. And the President, who took Israel to the UN Security Council, has fared worst of all, his promise to "have Israel's back" debunked. These failures might not matter much in the short term, since Hamas has rejected any ceasefire and Israel has persisted with its military operations in spite of international pressure. (More than ever, it has enjoyed the tacit support of Arab leaders, including the Palestinian Authority, which would be happy to see Hamas overthrown.) However, the American failure in Gaza will have serious consequences for the confrontation with Iran. Israel no longer has any reason to trust U.S. guarantees of its security--not after the Obama administration insisted on a premature ceasefire that would have left the Hamas terror tunnels intact. In addition, Iran has no reason to fear American diplomatic or political pressures, since it is clear that Obama would eagerly accept peace at any price. The likely result is that Israel will launch a pre-emptive strike on Iran alone. That outcome has been described by analyst Kenneth Pollack as among the worst possible, since Israel has less capability than the U.S. to carry out such an attack. Still, Israelis would prefer to take the risk rather than face an Iranian nuclear weapon, which is more likely now that Obama has agreed to extend talks by four months. Israel feel they may have no choice.

Israel strike on Iran collapses US hege and draws Russia in

PressTV 8/2, PressTV is citing Kevin Barrett. Barret is a professor of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies and has a PhD in Arabic-Islamology. ("Israel strike on Iran would spell doom for US Empire: Analyst", <http://www.presstv.com/detail/2014/03/25/355996/israel-strike-on-iran-to-end-us-empire/>, 8/2/2014) Kerwin

If Israel launches a military attack on Iran, it will end the US Empire which might be more accurately termed as the New World Order bankster empire, a political analyst says. "If Netanyahu attacks Iran and succeeds in dragging the US and Russia into the war, this week could witness not just the end of the US Empire, but the beginning of the end of civilization," Kevin Barrett, a professor of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, wrote in an article for Press TV website. He added that while irrational attachment to Israel has lured the Empire into a series of disastrous attacks on Muslim-majority states, US President Barack Obama has thus far resisted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's orders to attack Iran. "The US is still doing the bidding of the Zionist bankster oligarchs who are the real power behind the Western throne. And those oligarchs – or at least the hawkish among them – are still pushing for world war," the analyst said. He said the oligarch hawks and the Israeli premier as their front man, frustrated by US resistance to attacking Iran, are trying to start World War III in less direct fashion. "Now, with the great powers on hair-trigger alert, Netanyahu, who has spent \$3 billion preparing a go-it-alone plan to attack Iran, can light the fuse of World War III any time he chooses," Barrett explained. He pointed to the Malaysian Flight 370 incident and suggested it might have been an attempt to inflame Western public opinion against Iran. Following the disappearance of the

Malaysian plane, many American and Zionist propaganda outlets focused suspicion on a fabricated story about two Iranian men who supposedly boarded Flight 370 on stolen passports, he added. The commentator pointed to the apparent photoshopping of the two Iranians boarding Malaysian Flight 370 and asked, "Was this yet another attempt to incite wars against Israel's enemies?" "Even if the Empire's lunatic fringe [the Israel-centric neoconservatives] is stymied this week, they will have many future opportunities to wreak havoc – unless relatively rational Western leaders, assuming that any exist, decide to expose the neocons' gravest misdeeds and put an end to their reckless warmongering," Barrett concluded.